

very quick and he mastered the suggestions of others and made them clearer and more strong. He had a great grasp; thoroughly mastered a subject; deep and acute; and sometimes when you thought him slow, was only exhaustive. In his statements accurate, complete and singularly lucid: the clearest mind on affairs with equal power of conceiving and communicating his perspicuous views.

His soul wanted ardor, for he was deficient in imagination, though by no means void of sensibility. He adapted himself to circumstances in a moment, though he could not create, or even considerably control them. His ambition active not soaring. Its natural height to hold the Great Seal thrice but when the King in 1836 had it conveyed to him that he might be called upon to take the first place, and would he be ready, he exclaimed 'Why, I am a lawyer, not a statesman, and seemed disconcerted: but when he had talked over the matter with a friend,¹ he not only arrived at the result that he was a statesman, but let his Master too assured that he was prepared to do his bidding, though it was one unusual; difficult and perilous. His cultivation was considerable far more than he was given credit for. His reading had been various and extensive, though he never sought to display it; and his scientific acquirements notable. He retained and digested everything; supported by a powerful and well ordered memory.

A pleader rather than an orator, and never a debate Unsuccessful in the House of Commons, he rose at once in the House of Lords to a position of unapproached supremacy the times were favourable to him there. His stately and luminous expositions, in a voice of thrilling music, were adapted to a senate of which he caught the tone with facility. His taste almost amounted to austerity, yet he did not appreciate Demosthenes, and was a strong Ciceronian.

He had a sweet disposition, with a temper that nothing could ruffle; indulgent, placable, free from prejudice and utterly devoid of vanity. His feelings perhaps were not very strong, but they were always lucid. He was wonderful fond of the society of women, and this not merely from susceptibility to the sex, which was notorious, but because he was fond of them in every relation of life. He loved to be surrounded by his family, who were all females: a mother, a sister nearly his own age, and who survived him.

¹ There is here an interlineal gloss—'i.e., D. — 1873.'

